



Committee Secretary
Senate Education and Employment Legislation Committee
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

via: eec.sen@aph.gov.au

5 April 2023

Dear Secretary,

Re: Jobs and Skills Australia Amendment Bill 2023 [Provisions]

University of Canberra is pleased to provide a letter to the Committee's Inquiry into the Jobs and Skills Australia Amendment Bill 2023 [Provisions].

The University is well placed to comment on jobs and skills and the uplift of our community. We are a university with a civic mission for Canberra and a focus on professions.

We refer to our previous submission to this Committee, regarding the initial Bill to establish Jobs and Skills Australia as a new statutory body within the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations. We argued that it is critical that the scope of skills provision considered by Jobs and Skill Australia is across the full ecosystem, including universities.

Following the Inquiry, we were pleased that an amendment introduced by Senator David Pocock was passed, explicitly including universities in the remit.

Since that time, I have met with Peter Dawkins, Interim Director of Jobs and Skills Australia and I am confident in the direction the agency is taking.

The University welcomes amendments in this Bill including

- renaming the JSA Director, as the Jobs and Skills Australia Commissioner
- providing for up to two Deputy Commissioners
- establishing a Ministerial Advisory Board
- confirming a review of Jobs and Skills Australia at the two-way mark.
- establishing additional functions of Jobs and Skills Australia

We are in strong agreement on a proposed additional function, at 9(1)(c)(cc), to

"undertake studies, including on opportunities to improve employment, VET and higher education outcomes for cohorts of individuals that have historically experienced labour market disadvantage and exclusion"

This aligns with our values as we are committed to equity, diversity, inclusion, and access, and aim to be a university of choice for underrepresented groups.

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Addressing disadvantage, and access and opportunity, is included in the terms of reference for the review into Australia's higher education system that will underpin Australia's Universities Accord.

The Accord terms of reference also includes 'meeting Australia's knowledge and skills needs, now and in the future'.

There is a need for a **whole-of-government approach** around jobs and skills and the extent to which this relates to other reforms.

We encourage the Committee to consider the current work on a Universities Accord and stakeholder feedback that covers jobs and skills.

We recommend that the Senate pass this Bill.

Yours sincerely,

Professor Paddy Nixon

Vice-Chancellor and President

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